

T H E

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PREDESTINATION CALMLY CONSIDERED.

[By JOHN WESLEY, M. A.]

[Continued from page 425.]

LVI. **N**OW, you are probably thinking of *Esau* and *Pharaoh*. Do you then set it down as an unquestionable truth, that these were eternally condemned, by the *mere sovereign* will of GOD? Are you sure, that they were *eternally* condemned? Even that point is not altogether certain. It is no where affirmed in holy writ: and it would cost you some pains to prove it. It is true, *Pharaoh's* death was a punishment from GOD: but it does not follow, that he was punished everlastingly. And if he was, it was not by the *mere sovereign will* of GOD, but because of his own stubbornness and impenitence.

Of this *Moses* has given us a particular account; accordingly we read, *When Pharaoh saw that there was respite* (after he was delivered from the plague of frogs) *he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them*, Exod. viii. 15. So after the plague of flies; *Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go*, ver. 32. Again, *When Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants*, chap.

chap. ix. 34. After GOD had given him all this space to repent, and had expostulated with him for his obstinate impenitence in those solemn words, *How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me?* chap. x. 3. What wonder is it, if GOD then *hardened his heart*, that is, permitted Satan to harden it: if he at length wholly withdrew his softening grace, and gave him up to a reprobate mind?

LVII. The case of *Esau* is widely different from this: although his conduct also is blamable in many points. The first was the selling his birthright to *Jacob*, Gen. xxv. 31, &c. The next, his marrying against his father's consent, chap. xxvi. 34, 35. but it is highly probable he was sensible of his fault; because *Isaac* appears to have been fully reconciled to him, when he said, *My son, make me some savoury meat, that my soul may bless thee before I die*, Gen. xxvii. 4.

In the following verses we have an account of the manner wherein he was supplanted by his brother *Jacob*. Upon *Isaac's* relation of this, *Esau* cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, ver. 34. and said unto his father, *Bless me, even me also, O my father!* but he found no place, says the apostle, *for repentance*, for recovering the blessing, though he sought it carefully with tears. *Thy brother*, said *Isaac*, *hath taken away thy blessing: I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed.* So that all *Esau's* sorrow and tears could not recover his birthright, and the blessing annexed thereto.

And yet there is great reason to hope, that *Esau*, as well as *Jacob*, is now in *Abraham's* bosom. For although for a time he *hated Jacob*, and afterward came against him with four hundred men, very probably designing to take revenge for the injuries he had sustained; yet we find, when they met, *Esau* ran and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. So thoroughly had GOD changed his heart. And why should we doubt but that happy change continued?

LVIII. You can ground no solid objection to this, on St. Paul's words in the epistle to the Romans: *It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, chap. ix. 12, 13. For it is undeniably plain, that both these scriptures relate, not to the persons of *Jacob* and *Esau*, but to their descendants; the Israelites sprung from *Jacob*, and the Edomites sprung from *Esau*. In this sense only did *the elder* (*Esau*) *serve the younger*: not in his person (for *Esau* never served *Jacob*;) but in his posterity. The posterity of the elder brother served the posterity of the younger.

The other text referred to by the apostle, runs thus: *I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness*, Mal. i. 2, 3. Whose heritage was it that GOD laid waste? Not that which *Esau* personally enjoyed; but that of his posterity, the Edomites, for their enormous sins, largely described by several of the prophets. So neither is there here any instance of any man being finally condemned, by the mere sovereign will of GOD.

LIX. The *unchangeableness* of GOD we allow likewise. *In him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning*. But you seem to lie under a mistake, concerning this also, for want of observing the scripture-account of it. The scripture teaches, 1. That GOD is unchangeable, with regard to his decrees. But what decrees? The same that he has commanded to be *preached to every creature*, "*He that believeth, shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned*." The scripture teaches, 2. That GOD is unchangeable with regard to his love and hatred. But how? Observe this well; for it is your grand mistake, and the root of almost all the rest. GOD unchangeably loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity. Unchangeably he loveth faith, and unchangeably hateth unbelief. In consequence hereof he unchangeably loveth the righteous, and hateth the workers of iniquity. He unchangeably loves them that believe, and hates wilful, obstinate unbelievers. So that the scripture-account of GOD's *unchangeableness*, with regard to his
decrees,

decrees, is this: he has unchangeably decreed to save holy believers, and to condemn obstinate, impenitent unbelievers. And, according to scripture, his unchangeableness of affection, properly and primarily regards tempers and not persons: and persons (as *Enoch, Noah, Abraham*) only as those tempers are found in them. Let then the unchangeableness of GOD be put on the right foot, let the scripture be allowed to fix the objects of it, and it will as soon prove transubstantiation, as unconditional Election.

LX. The *faithfulness* of GOD may be termed a branch of his truth. He *will perform* what he *hath promised*. But then let us enquire of the oracle of GOD, to whom the promises are made? the promises of life and immortality? The answer is, *To Abraham and his seed*, that is, to those who *walk in the steps of the faith of their father Abraham*. To those who believe, as believers, are the gospel-promises made. To these has the faithful GOD engaged, that he will do what he hath spoken. *He will fulfil his covenant and promise which he hath made to a thousand generations*: the sum of which is, as we find it expressly declared by the Spirit of GOD, *the Lord will give grace (more grace) and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that live a godly life*.

LXI. This covenant of GOD I understand: but I have heard of another which I understand not. I have heard, “that GOD the Father made a covenant with his Son, “before the world began, wherein the Son agreed to suffer such and such things, and the Father to give him “such and such souls for a recompence: that in consequence of this, those souls *must* be saved, and those only, so that all others *must* be damned.” I beseech you where is this written? In what part of scripture is this covenant to be found? We may well expect a thing of this moment to be revealed very expressly, with the utmost clearness and solemnity! But where is this done? And if it is not done, if there is no such an account in all the bible: what shall we wonder at most, that any serious man should

should advance, or that thousands should believe, so strange an assertion, without one plain text of scripture to support it, from Genesis to the Revelation.

LXII. I suppose you do not imagine, that the bare word *covenant*, if it occurred ever so often in holy writ, is a proof of any such covenant as this. The grand covenant which we allow to be mentioned therein, is a covenant between GOD and man, established in the hand of a mediator, who *tasted death for every man*, and thereby purchased it for all the children of men. The tenor of it (so often mentioned already) is this: "whosoever believeth unto the end, so as to show his faith by his works, I, the Lord, will reward that soul eternally. But whosoever will not believe, and consequently dieth in his sins, I will punish him with everlasting destruction."

LXIII. To examine thoroughly whether this covenant between GOD and man be unconditional or conditional, it may be needful to go back as far as *Abraham*, the father of the faithful: to enquire what manner of covenant it was, which GOD made with him; and whether any reason be assigned, of GOD's peculiarly blessing *Abraham*, and all the nations of the earth in him.

The first mention of the covenant between GOD and him, occurs in Gen. xv. 18. "The same day the Lord made a covenant with *Abram*, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land." But this is much more explicitly related in the seventeenth chapter, ver. 1, &c. "The Lord appeared to *Abram*, and said unto him, I am the Almighty GOD: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And *Abram* fell on his face; and GOD talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called *Abram*, but thy name shall be *Abraham*: for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their ge-

nerations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a GOD unto thee, and to thy seed after thee—Every man-child among you shall be circumcised—it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you—The uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off; he hath broken my covenant.” So we see, this original covenant, though *everlasting*, was conditional, and man’s failing in the condition, cleared GOD.

LXIV. We have St. *Paul*’s account of this covenant of GOD with *Abraham*, in the fourth chapter of his epistle to the Romans, ver. 3, &c. “*Abraham* (saith he) believed GOD, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” (This is related in Gen. xv. 6.) “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision (*i. e. of them that are circumcised*) to them that are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father *Abraham*, which he had being yet uncircumcised.” Now if these words do not express a conditional covenant, certainly none can.

LXV. The nature and ground of this covenant of GOD with *Abraham* is further explained, Gen. xviii. 17, &c. “And the Lord said, Shall I hide from *Abraham* that thing which I do; seeing all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?” For “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him: and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon *Abraham* that which he hath spoken of him.”

Does GOD say here, *I will do it, because I will?* Nothing less. The reason is explicitly assigned: “All nations shall be blessed in him:” for “he will command his children, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.”

The reason is yet more (clearly, it cannot, but more) fully set down in the twenty-second chapter, ver. 16, &c. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; BECAUSE thou hast done this thing, and hast not with-held thy son; that in blessing I will bless thee—and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed (that is, the Messiah shall spring from thee:) BECAUSE thou hast obeyed my voice."

This is yet again declared, chap. xxvi. ver. 2, &c. "And the Lord appeared unto *Isaac*, and said—Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee: for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will perform the oath which I swore unto *Abraham* thy father. In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed: BECAUSE that *Abraham* obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."

LXVI. This covenant made to *Abraham* and his seed, is mentioned again, Exod. xix. ver. 3, &c. "And the Lord called unto *Moses*, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of *Jacob*, and tell the children of *Israel*, ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, IF ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people."

In the following chapter, GOD declares the terms of the covenant they were to keep, in ten commandments. And these themselves are sometimes termed, the *covenant*; sometimes, *the book of the covenant*. So chap. xxiv. ver. 4, &c. after GOD had made an end of speaking to the people, it is said, "And *Moses* wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning—and he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do. And *Moses* took the blood (of the burnt-offering) and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words."

After

After the people had broken this covenant by worshipping the golden calf, GOD renews it, chap. xxxiv. where we read, ver. 27, 28. "And the Lord said unto *Moses*, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with *Israel*—And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."

LXVII. According to the tenor of this covenant, made to *Abraham* and his seed, GOD afterwards declares, Levit. xxvi. ver. 3, &c. "If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will establish my covenant with you, and I will be your GOD, and ye shall be my people—But if ye will not hearken unto me, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant; I will set my face against you, and I will avenge the quarrel of my covenant—yet if they shall confess their iniquity, and if their uncircumcised hearts be humbled—then will I remember my covenant with *Jacob*, and also my covenant with *Isaac*, and also my covenant with *Abraham* will I remember." Consequently the covenant with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, was conditional, as well as that with their posterity.

LXVIII. "But is not the faithfulness of GOD engaged "to keep all that now believe from falling away?" I cannot say that. Whatever assurance GOD may give to particular souls, I find no general promise in holy writ, "That "none who once believes, shall finally fall." Yet, to say the truth, this is so pleasing an opinion, so agreeable to the flesh and blood, so suitable to whatever of nature remains in those who have tasted the grace of GOD, that I see nothing but the mighty power of GOD, which can restrain any who hears it from closing with it. But still it wants one thing to recommend it, plain, cogent scripture-proof.

[Continued at page 521.]

SERMON

S E R M O N XXII.

On HEBREWS xiii. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch over your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

1. **E**XCEEDING few, not only among nominal christians, but among truly religious men, have any clear conception of that important doctrine, which is here delivered by the apostle. Very many scarce think of it, and hardly know that there is any such direction in the bible. And the greater part of those who know it is there, and imagine they follow it, do not understand it, but lean too much either to the right hand or to the left, to one extreme or the other. It is well known to what an extravagant height the Romanists in general carry this direction. Many of them believe an implicit faith is due to the doctrines delivered by those that rule over them; and that implicit obedience ought to be paid to whatever commands they give; and not much less has been insisted on, by several eminent men of the church of *England*. Although it is true that the generality of protestants are apt to run to the other extreme: allowing their pastors no authority at all, but making them both the creatures and the servants of their congregations.

2. But is it not possible to find a medium between these two extremes? Is there any necessity for us to run, either into one or into the other? If we set human laws out of the question, and simply attend to the oracles of GOD, we may certainly discover a middle path in this important matter. In order thereto, let us carefully examine the words of the apostle above recited. Let us consider,

First, Who are the persons mentioned in the text, *they that rule over us?*

Secondly, Who are they whom the apostle directs, to *obey and submit themselves to them?*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, What is the meaning of this direction? In what sense are they to *obey and submit themselves*? I shall then endeavour to make a suitable application of the whole.

I. 1. Consider we, first, Who are the persons mentioned in the text, *they that have the rule over you*? I do not conceive that the words of the apostle are properly translated; because this translation makes the sentence little better than tautology. If they *rule over you*, you are certainly ruled by them: so that according to this translation, you are only enjoined to do what you do already: to obey those whom you do obey. Now there is another meaning of the Greek word, which seems abundantly more proper: it means to *guide*, as well as to rule. And thus, it seems, it should be taken here. The direction then, when applied to our spiritual guides, is plain and pertinent.

2. This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the seventh verse; which fixes the meaning of this. "*Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of GOD.*" The apostle here shews, by the latter clause of the sentence, whom he meant in the former. Those that *were over them*, were the same persons *who spoke unto them the word of GOD*: that is, they were their pastors, those who guided and fed this part of the flock of Christ.

3. But by whom are these guides to be appointed? And what are they supposed to do, in order to be entitled to the obedience which is here prescribed?

Volumes upon volumes have been wrote on that knotty question, "By whom are guides of souls to be appointed?" I do not intend here, to enter at all into the dispute concerning church-government: nor to debate, whether it be advantageous or prejudicial to the interest of true religion, that the church and the state should be blended together, as they have been ever since the time of *Constantine* in every part of the Roman Empire, where christianity has been received. Waving all these points (which may find employment enough for men that abound in leisure) by them that guide you I mean, them that do it, if not by
your

your choice, at least by your consent: them that you willingly accept of to be your guides, in the way to heaven.

4. But what are they supposed to do, in order to entitle them to the obedience here prescribed?

They are supposed to go before the flock (as is the manner of the eastern shepherds to this day) and to guide them in all the ways of truth and holiness: they are to *nourish them with the words of eternal life*, to feed them with the *pure milk of the word*: applying it continually *for doctrine*, teaching them all the essential doctrines contained therein: *for reproof*, warning them if they turn aside from the way to the right hand or to the left: *for correction*, shewing them how to amend what is amiss, and guiding them back into the way of peace: and *for instruction in righteousness*, training them up in inward and outward holiness, *until they come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*.

5. They are supposed to *watch over your souls, as those that shall give account*. As those that shall give account! How unspeakably solemn, and awful are these words! May GOD write them upon the heart of every guide of souls!

They watch, waking while others sleep, over the flock of Christ; over the souls that he has bought with a price, that he has purchased with his own blood. They have them in their hearts both by day and by night; regarding neither sleep nor food in comparison of them. Even while they sleep, their heart is waking, full of concern for their beloved children. *They watch* with deep earnestness, with uninterrupted seriousness, with unwearied care, patience, and diligence, as they that are about to give an account of every particular soul, to him that standeth at the door, to the Judge of quick and dead.

II. 1. We are, secondly, to consider, Who those are whom the apostle directs to obey them that have the rule over them? And in order to determine this with certainty and clearness, we shall not appeal to human institutions, but simply (as in answering the preceding question) appeal to that decision of it, which we find in the oracles of GOD. Indeed we have hardly occasion to go one step farther

farther than the text itself. Only it may be proper, first, to remove out of the way some popular opinions, which have been almost every where taken for granted, but can in nowise be proved.

2. It is usually supposed, first, That the apostle is here directing *parishioners* to obey and submit themselves to the *minister* of their parish. But can any one bring the least shadow of proof for this from the holy scripture? Where is it written, that we are bound to obey any minister, because we live in what is called his parish? "Yes," you say, "we are bound to *obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.*" True, in all things indifferent; but this is not so: it is exceeding far from it. It is far from being a thing indifferent to *me*, who is the guide of *my* soul. I dare not receive one as my guide to heaven, that is himself in the high road to hell. I dare not take a wolf for my shepherd, that has not so much as sheep's clothing; that is a common swearer, an open drunkard, a notorious sabbath-breaker. And such (the more is the shame, and the more the pity) are many parochial ministers at this day.

3. "But are you not properly members of that congregation, to which your parents belong?" I do not apprehend that I am: I know no scripture that obliges me to this. I owe all deference to the commands of my parents, and willingly obey them in all things lawful. But it is not lawful to *call them Rabbi*, that is, to believe or obey them implicitly. Every one must give an account of himself to GOD. Therefore every man must judge for himself: especially in a point of so deep importance as this is, the choice of a guide for his soul.

4. But we may bring this matter to a short issue, by recurring to the very words of the text. They that have voluntarily connected themselves with such pastors as answer the description given therein: such as do in fact watch over their souls, as they that shall give account: such as do nourish them up with the words of eternal life: such as feed them with the pure milk of the word, and constantly apply it to them for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness: all who
have

have found and chosen guides of this character, of this spirit and behaviour, are undoubtedly required by the apostle, to *obey and submit themselves* to them.

III. 1. But what is the meaning of this direction? This remains to be considered. In what sense, and how far, does the apostle direct them, to *obey and submit to their spiritual guides*?

If we attend to the proper sense of the two words here used by the apostle, we may observe that the former of them (*πείθομαι* from *πείθω* to persuade) refers to the understanding; the latter, *υπακούω* to the will and outward behaviour. To begin with the former. What influence ought our spiritual guides to have over our understanding? We dare no more call our spiritual fathers Rabbi, than the *fathers of our flesh*. We dare no more yield implicit faith to the former than to the latter. In this sense *one is our Master* (or rather *Teacher*) *who is in heaven*. But whatever submission, of even our understanding, is short of this, we may, nay, we ought to yield to them.

2. To explain this a little farther. St. James uses a word which is nearly allied to the former of these. *The wisdom which is from above, is υπακούη easy to be convinced, or to be persuaded*. Now if we ought to have and to shew this wisdom toward all men; we ought to have it in a more eminent degree, and to shew it upon every occasion, toward those that *watch over our souls*. With regard to these, above all other men, we should be *easy to be intreated*: easily convinced of any truth, and easily persuaded to any thing that is not sinful.

3. A word of nearly the same import with this, is frequently used by St. Paul; namely, *επιεικής*. In our translation, it is more than once rendered *gentle*. But perhaps it might be more properly rendered (if the word may be allowed) *yielding*; ready to yield, to give up our own will, in every thing that is not a point of duty. This amiable temper every real christian enjoys, and shews in his intercourse with all men. But he shews it in a particular manner, toward those that watch over his soul. He is not only willing to receive any instruction from them, to be convinced

of any thing which he did not know before: to lie open to their advice, and glad to receive admonition or reproof; but is ready to give up his own will, whenever he can do it with a clear conscience. Whatever they desire him to do, he does; if it be not forbidden in the word of GOD. Whatever they desire him to refrain from, he does so; if it be not enjoined in the word of GOD. This is plainly implied in those words of the apostle, *Submit yourselves to them: yield to them: give up your own will.* This is meet, and right, and your bounden duty, if they do indeed watch over your souls, as they that shall give account. If you do thus obey and submit yourselves to them, they will give an account of you with joy; not with groaning, as they must otherwise do: for although they should be clear of your blood, yet *that would be unprofitable to you*: yea, a prelude of eternal damnation.

How acceptable to GOD was an instance of obedience, somewhat similar to this! You have a large and particular account of it in the thirty-fifth chapter of *Jeremiah*. *The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and give them wine to drink. Then I took the whole house of the Rechabites (all the heads of their families) and set before them pots full of wine, and said unto them, Drink ye wine: but they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab (a great man in the reign of Jehu) the son of Rechab, from whom we are named, being the father of our family, commanded us, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye nor your sons for ever. And we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab our father, in all that he charged us.* We do not know any particular reason why Jonadab gave this charge to his posterity. But as it was not sinful, they gave this strong instance of gratitude to their great benefactor. And how pleasing this was to the Father of their spirits, we learn from the words that follow. *And Jeremiah said unto the Rechabites, Because ye have obeyed the voice of Jonadab your father, therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Jonadab shall not want a man, to stand before me for ever.*

5. Now it is certain, christians owe full as much gratitude and obedience, to those that watch over their souls,

as ever the house of the *Rechabites* owed to *Jonadab* the son of *Rechab*. And we cannot doubt, but the Lord is as well-pleased with *our* obedience to these, as ever he was with *their* obedience to *Jonadab*. If he was so well-pleased with the gratitude and obedience of this people to their temporal benefactor, have we not all reason to believe, He is full as well-pleased with the gratitude and obedience of christians, to those who derive far greater blessings to them, than ever *Jonadab* conveyed to his posterity?

6. It may be of use, yet again to consider, In what instances is it the duty of christians to obey and submit themselves to those that watch over their souls. Now the things which they enjoin, must be either enjoined of GOD, or forbidden by him, or indifferent. In things forbidden of GOD we dare not obey them; for we are to obey GOD rather than man. In things enjoined of GOD, we do not properly obey Them, but our common Father. Therefore if we are to obey them at all, it must be in things indifferent. The sum is, It is the duty of every private christian, to obey his spiritual pastor, by either doing, or leaving undone, any thing of an indifferent nature; any thing that is in no way determined in the word of GOD.

7. But how little is this understood in the *protestant* world? At least, in *England* and *Ireland*? Who is there, even among those that are supposed to be good christians, who dreams there is such a duty as this? And yet there is not a more express command, either in the old or the new testament. No words can be more clear and plain: no command more direct and positive. Therefore certainly none who receive the scripture as the word of GOD, can live in the habitual breach of this, and yet plead innocence. Such an instance of wilful, or at least careless disobedience, must grieve the Holy Spirit of GOD. It cannot but hinder the grace of GOD from having its full effect upon the heart. It is not improbable, that this very disobedience may be one cause of the deadness of many souls: one reason of their not receiving those blessings, which they seek with some degree of sincerity.

8. It

8. It remains only, to make a short application of what has now been delivered.

You that read this, do you apply it to yourself? Do you examine yourself thereby? Do not *you* stop your own growth in grace, if not by wilful disobedience to this command; yet by a careless inattention to it, by not considering it, as the importance of it deserves? If so, you defraud yourself of many blessings, which you might enjoy. Or, are you of a better mind, of a more excellent spirit? Is it your fixt resolution and your constant endeavour, *to obey them that have the rule over you in the Lord?* To submit yourself as cheerfully to your spiritual, as to your natural parents? Do you ask, "Wherein should I submit to them?" The answer has been given already: not in things enjoined of GOD: not in things forbidden by him; but in things indifferent; in all that are not determined one way or the other, by the oracles of GOD. It is true, this cannot be done in some instances, without a considerable degree of self-denial, when they advise you to refrain from something that is agreeable to flesh and blood. And it cannot be obeyed in other instances, without taking up your cross: without suffering some pain or inconvenience, that is not agreeable to flesh and blood. For that solemn declaration of our Lord has place here, as well as on a thousand other occasions, *Except a man deny himself, and take up his cross daily, he cannot be my disciple.* But this will not affright you, if you resolve to be, not only almost, but altogether a christian; if you determine to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

9. I would now apply myself in a more particular manner to *you*, who desire *me* to watch over your souls. Do *you* make it a point of conscience to *obey me* for my Master's sake? To *submit yourselves to me* in things indifferent; things not determined in the word of GOD? In all things that are not enjoined, nor yet forbidden in scripture? Are you *easy to be intreated*, as by men in general, so by *me* in particular? Easy to be convinced of any truth, however contrary to your former prejudices? And easy to be persuaded to do or forbear any indifferent thing at *my* desire? You cannot

cannot but see, that all this is clearly contained in the very words of the text. And you cannot but acknowledge, that it is highly reasonable for you so to do, if I do employ all my time, all my substance, all my strength both of body and soul, not in seeking my own honour, or pleasure; but in promoting your present and eternal salvation: if I do indeed *watch over your souls as one that must give account.*

10. Do you then take my advice (I ask in the presence of GOD and all the world) with regard to *dress*? I published that advice above thirty years ago: I have repeated it a thousand times since. I have advised you not to be conformable to the world herein: to lay aside all needless ornaments; to avoid all needless expence; to be patterns of plainness to all that are round about you. Have you taken this advice? Have you all, men and women, young and old, rich and poor, laid aside all those needless ornaments, which I particularly objected to? Are you all exemplarily plain in your apparel? As plain as Quakers (so called) or Moravians? If not, if you are still dressed like the generality of people of your own rank and fortune, you declare hereby to all the world, that you will not obey them that are over you in the Lord. You declare, in open defiance of GOD and man, that you will not *submit yourselves* to them. Many of you carry your sins on your forehead, openly and in the face of the sun. You harden your hearts against instruction and against conviction: you harden one another: especially those of you that were once convinced, and have now stifled your convictions. You encourage one another, to stop your ears against the truth, and shut your eyes against the light, lest haply you should see, that you are fighting against GOD, and against your own souls. If I were now called to give an account of you, it would be *with groans, and not with joy.* And sure that would be *unprofitable for you*: the loss would fall upon your own head.

11. I speak all this on supposition (though that is a supposition not to be made) that the bible was silent on this head: that the scripture said nothing concerning *dress*, and left it to every one's own discretion. But if all other texts were silent, this is enough, *Submit yourselves to them that are*
over

over you in the Lord. I bind this upon your consciences, in the sight of GOD. Were it only in obedience to this direction, you cannot be clear before GOD, unless you throw aside all needless ornaments, in utter defiance of that tyrant of fools, fashion; unless you seek only to be adorned with good works, as men and women professing godliness.

12. Perhaps you will say, "This is only a little thing: it is a mere trifle." I answer, If it be, you are the more inexcusable before GOD and man. What! Will you disobey a plain commandment of GOD for a *mere trifle*? GOD forbid! Is it a trifle to sin against GOD? To set his authority at nought? Is this a little thing? Nay, remember, 'There can be no little sin, till we can find a little god! Mean time be assured of one thing: the more conscientiously you obey your spiritual guides, the more powerfully will GOD apply the word, which they speak in his name, to your heart! The more plentifully will he water what is spoken, with the dew of his blessing: and the more proofs will you have, it is not only they that speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaketh in them.

Bristol, March 18, 1785.

AN EXTRACT

Of the Revd. Mr. JOHN WESLEY's JOURNAL,

From August 12th, 1738, to November 1st, 1739.

[Continued from page 443.]

SUFFER me now, to tell you *my* principles in this matter. I look upon *all the world* as *my parish*; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know GOD has called me to. And sure I am, that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I therefore to be faithful in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed (glory be to him) day and night in his service. I am employed according to the plain direction of his word, *as I have opportunity of doing good unto all men*. And his providence clearly concurs with his word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, *and go about doing good*.

If you ask, "How can this be? How can one do good, of whom *men say all manner of evil*?" I will put you in mind (though you once knew this, yea, and much established me in that great truth) the more evil men say of me for my Lord's sake, the more good will he do by me. That it is *for his sake* I know and he knoweth, and the event agreeth thereto; for he mightily confirms the words I speak, by the Holy Ghost given unto those that hear them. O my friend, my heart is moved toward you. I fear, you have herein made shipwreck of the faith. I fear, *Satan, transformed into an angel of light*, hath assaulted you, and prevailed also. I fear, that offspring of hell, *worldly or mystic prudence*, has drawn you away from the simplicity of the gospel. How else could you ever conceive, that the being reviled and *hated of all men*, should make us less fit for our Master's service? How else could you ever think, of *saving yourself and them that hear you*, without being the *filth*
and

and off-scouring of the world? To this hour, is this scripture true. And I therein rejoice, yea, and *will* rejoice. Blessed be GOD, I enjoy the reproach of Christ! O may you also be vile, exceeding vile for his sake! GOD forbid that you should ever be other than *generally* scandalous. I had almost said, *universally*. If any man tell you, there is a new way of following Christ, *he is a liar and the truth is not in him.*

I am, &c.

Wednesday 13. In the morning I came to *London*, and after receiving the holy communion at *Islington*, I had once more an opportunity of seeing my mother, whom I had not seen since my return from *Germany*.

I cannot but mention an odd circumstance here. I had read her a paper in *June* last year, containing a short account of what had passed in my own soul, till within a few days of that time. She greatly approved it, and said, "She heartily blessed GOD, who had brought me to so just a way of thinking." While I was in *Germany*, a copy of that paper was sent (without my knowledge) to one of my relations. He sent an account of it to my mother; whom I now found under strange fears concerning me, being convinced by "*an account taken from one of my own papers,* that I had greatly erred from the faith." I could not conceive, what paper that should be; but on enquiry found it was the same I had read her myself.—How hard is it to form a true judgment of any person or thing, from the account of a prejudiced relater! Yea, though he be ever so honest a man: for he who gave this relation, was one of unquestionable veracity. And yet by his *sincere* account of a writing which lay before his eyes, was the truth so totally disguised, that my mother knew not the paper she had heard from end to end, nor I that I had myself wrote.

At 6 I warned the women at *Fetter-lane* (knowing how they had been lately shaken) *not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits, whether they were of GOD.* Our brethren met at 8, when it pleased GOD to remove many misunderstandings

derstandings and offences that had crept in among them: and to restore in good measure *the spirit of love and of a sound mind.*

Thursday 14. I went with Mr. *Whitefield* to *Blackbeath*, where were, I believe, twelve or fourteen thousand people. He a little surprised me, by desiring me to preach in his stead; which I did (though nature recoiled) on my favourite subject, *Jesus Christ, who of GOD is made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*

I was greatly moved with compassion for the rich that were there, to whom I made a particular application. Some of them seemed to attend, while others drove away their coaches from so uncouth a preacher.

Friday 15. I had much talk with one who is called a Quaker. But he could not receive my saying. I was too strict for him, and talked of such a perfection, as he could not think necessary: being persuaded, *there was no harm* in costly apparel, provided it was plain and grave: nor in putting scarlet or gold upon our houses, so it were not upon our clothes.

In the evening I went to a society at *Wapping*, weary in body, and faint in spirit. I intended to speak on *Romans iii. 19.* but could not tell how to open my mouth: and all the time we were singing, my mind was full of some place, I knew not where, in the epistle to the *Hebrews*. I begged GOD to direct, and opened the book on *Heb. x. 19.* Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of *Jesus*, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; —let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. While I was earnestly inviting all sinners to enter into the holiest by this new and living way, many of those that heard, began to call upon GOD, with strong cries and tears. Some sunk down, and there remained no strength in them; others exceedingly trembled and quaked; some were torn with a kind of convulsive motion in every part of their bodies, and that so violently that often four or five persons could not hold one

of them. I have seen many hysterical and many epileptic fits; but none of them were like these, in many respects. I immediately prayed, "that GOD would not suffer those who were weak to be offended." But one woman was greatly; being sure "*they might help it* if they would, no one should persuade her to the contrary;" and was got three or four yards, when she also dropt down in as violent an agony as the rest. Twenty-six of those who had been much affected (most of whom, during the prayers which were made for them, were in a moment filled with peace and joy) promised to call upon me the next day. But only eighteen came; by talking closely with whom I found reason to believe, that some of them had gone home to their house, justified. The rest seemed to be patiently waiting for it.

Saturday 16. We met at *Fetter-lane*, to humble ourselves before GOD, and own he had justly withdrawn his Spirit from us, for our manifold unfaithfulness. We acknowledged our having grieved him by our divisions, *one saying, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos*: by our leaning again to our own works, and trusting in them, instead of Christ: by our resting in those little beginnings of sanctification, which it had pleased him to work in our souls: and above all, by blaspheming his work among us, imputing it either to nature, to the force of imagination and animal spirits, or even to the delusion of the devil. In that hour, we found GOD with us as at the first. Some fell prostrate upon the ground. Others burst out, as with one consent, into loud praise and thanksgiving. And many openly testified, there had been no such day as this, since *January* the 1st preceding.

Sunday 17. I preached at 7 in *Upper Moorfields*, to (I believe) six or seven thousand people, on, *He! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters*. In the afternoon, I saw poor R—— T——, who had left our society, and the church: We did not dispute, but pray; and in a short space the scales fell off from his eyes. He gladly returned to the church, and was in the evening re-admitted into our society.

At

At 5 I preached on *Kennington-Common*, to about fifteen thousand people, on those words, *Look unto him, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.*

Monday 18. I left *London* early in the morning, and the next evening reached *Bristol*, and preached (as I had appointed, if GOD should permit) to a numerous congregation. My text now also was, *Look unto him, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.* *Howel Harris* called upon me an hour or two after. He said, "he had been much dissuaded from either hearing or seeing me, by many who said all manner of evil of me. But (said he) as soon as I heard you preach, I quickly found what spirit you was of. And before you had done, I was so overpowered with joy and love, that I had much ado to walk home."

It is scarce credible, what advantage Satan had gained, during my absence of only eight days. Disputes had crept into our little society, so that the love of many was already waxed cold. I shewed them the state they were in the next day (both at *Newgate* and at *Baptist-Mills*) from those words, *Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.* And when we met in the evening, instead of reviving the dispute, we all betook ourselves to prayer. Our Lord was with us. Our divisions were healed. Misunderstandings vanished away. And all our hearts were sweetly drawn together, and united as at the first.

Friday 22. I called on one who did run well, till he was hindered by some of those called, *French prophets*. *Wo unto the prophets, saith the Lord, who prophesy in my name, and I have not sent them.* At *Weavers-Hall*, I endeavoured to point them out, and earnestly exhorted all that followed after holiness, to avoid as fire, all who do not speak according to the law and the testimony.

In the afternoon I preached at the *Fish-Ponds*, but had no life or spirit in me; and was much in doubt, whether GOD would not lay me aside, and send other labourers into his harvest. I came to the society full of this thought; and began in much weakness to explain, *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of GOD.*

I told

I told them, "they were not to judge of the spirit whereby any one spoke, either by *appearances*, or by *common report*, or by their own *inward feelings*. No, nor by any dreams, visions, or revelations, supposed to be made to their souls, any more than by their tears, or any involuntary effects wrought upon their bodies." I warned them, "all these were in themselves of a doubtful, disputable nature: they *might* be from GOD; and they *might not*; and were therefore not simply to be relied on (any more than simply to be condemned) but to be tried by a farther rule, to be brought to the only certain test, the law and the testimony." While I was speaking, one before me dropt down as dead, and presently a second and a third. Five others sunk down in half an hour, most of whom were in violent agonies. *The pains as of hell came about them; the snarls of death overtook them.* In their trouble we called upon the Lord, and he gave us an answer of peace. One indeed continued an hour in strong pain; and one or two more for three days. But the rest were greatly comforted in that hour, and went away rejoicing and praising GOD.

Saturday 23. I spoke severally with those who had been so troubled the night before. Some of them, I found, were only convinced of sin; others had indeed found rest to their souls. This evening another was seized with strong pangs. But in a short time her soul also was delivered.

Sunday 24. As I was riding to *Rose-Green*, in a smooth, plain part of the road, my horse suddenly pitched upon his head, and rolled over and over. I received no other hurt than a little bruise on one side, which for the present I felt not, but preached without pain to six or seven thousand people on that important direction, *Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of GOD.* In the evening a girl of thirteen or fourteen, and four or five other persons, some of whom had felt the power of GOD before, were deeply convinced of sin, and with sighs and groans which could not be uttered, called upon GOD for deliverance.

Monday

Monday 25. About 10 in the morning, *J—e C—r*, as she was sitting at work, was suddenly seized with grievous terrors of mind, attended with strong trembling. Thus she continued all the afternoon; but at the society in the evening GOD turned her heaviness into joy. Five or six others were also cut to the heart this day; and soon after found him *whose hands make whole*: as did one likewise, who had been mourning many months, without any to comfort her.

Tuesday 26. I preached near the house we had a few days before began to build for a school, in the middle of *Kingswood*, under a little sycamore-tree, during a violent storm of rain, on those words, *As the rain cometh down from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud:—So shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void. But it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it.*

Three persons terribly felt the wrath of GOD abiding on them, at the society this evening. But upon prayer made in their behalf, he was pleased soon to lift up the light of his countenance upon them.

Friday 29. I preached in a part of *Kingswood*, where I never had been before. The places in *Kingswood* where I now usually preached were these; once a fortnight, a little above *Connam*, a village on the south side of the wood; on *Sunday* morning, near *Hannam-Mount*: once a fortnight, at the school-house, in the middle of *Kingswood*. On *Sunday* in the evening at *Rose-Green*; and once a fortnight near the *Fish-Ponds*, on the north side of the wood.

Saturday 30. At *Weavers-Hall*, seven or eight persons were constrained to roar aloud, while the sword of the Spirit was dividing *asunder their souls and spirits, and joints and marrow*. But they were all relieved upon prayer, and sang praises unto our GOD and unto the Lamb that liveth for ever and ever.

I gave a particular account, from time to time, of the manner wherein GOD here carried on his work to those whom I believed to desire the increase of his kingdom,
with

with whom I had any opportunity of corresponding. Part of the answer, which I received (some time after) from one of these I cannot but here subjoin.

I DESIRE to bless my Lord, for the good and great news your letter bears, about the Lord's turning many souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD; and that such a great and effectual door is opened among you, as the many adversaries cannot shut. O may he that hath the keys of the house of David, that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, set the door of faith more and more open among you, till his house be filled, and till he gather together the outcasts of *Israel*. And may that prayer for the adversaries be heard, fill their faces with shame, that they may seek thy name, O Lord.

As to the outward manner you speak of, wherein most of them were affected who were cut to the heart by the sword of the Spirit, no wonder that this was at first surprising to you, since they are indeed so very rare, that have been thus pricked and wounded. Yet some of the instances you give, seem to be exemplified in the outward manner wherein *Paul* and the jailer were at first affected: as also *Peter's* hearers, *Acts* ii. The last instance you gave, of some struggling as in the agonies of death, and in such a manner as that four or five strong men can hardly restrain a weak woman from hurting herself or others: this is to me somewhat more inexplicable: if it do not resemble the child spoken of, *Mark* ix. 26. and *Luke* ix. 42. Of whom it is said, that while he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down and tare him. Or what influence sudden and sharp awakenings may have upon the body I pretend not to explain. But I make no question, Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to hinder the good work in the persons who are thus touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, and partly to disparage the work of GOD, as if it tended to lead people to distraction.—However, the merciful issue of these conflicts

fects in the conversion of the persons thus affected, is the main thing.

When they are brought by the saving arm of GOD to receive Christ Jesus, to have joy and peace in believing, and then to walk in him, and give evidence that the work is a saving work at length, whether more quickly or gradually accomplished, there is great matter of praise.—

All the outward appearances of people's being affected among us, may be reduced to these two sorts; one is, hearing with a close, silent attention, with gravity and greediness, discovered by fixed looks, weeping eyes, and sorrowful or joyful countenances: another sort is, when they lift up their voice aloud, some more depressedly, and others more highly; and at times, the whole multitude in a flood of tears, all as it were crying out at once, till their voice be ready to drown the minister's, that he can scarce be heard for the weeping noise that surrounds him.—The influence on some of these, like a land-flood, dries up; we hear of no change wrought. But in others, it appears in the fruits of righteousness, and the tract of a holy conversation.—

May the Lord strengthen you to go on in his work! and in praying for the coming of his kingdom with you and us, and I hope you shall not be forgotten among us, in our joint applications to the throne of grace.

I am, reverend, and dear Sir,

Your very affectionate Brother and Servant in Christ,

R. E.

[Continued at page 538.]

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

THE REVEREND JOHN FLETCHER.

[Continued from page 453.]

“IT would have remained a secret in this kingdom, even to his most intimate friends, that he was of so great a family, had not Mr. Ireland gone over with him to Switzerland:

Switzerland: where he was surprised to find Mr. *Fletcher's* relations some of the first people in the country.

"*Blessed are they that mourn*, said the Lord Jesus. And this blessedness was as certainly his as the former. He was a man of a serious spirit, one that stood at the utmost distance from levity of every kind. Though he was constantly cheerful, as rejoicing in hope of his heavenly inheritance, yet had he too deep a sense of his own wants, and the wants of the church of GOD, as also of the sins and miseries of mankind, to be at any time light or trifling. I have a letter before me (dated Dec. 1771) which at once gives us a picture of his seriousness, watchfulness, and earnestness; and contains advices well deserving the consideration of all that fear GOD.—"There is undoubtedly," said he, "such a thing as the *full assurance of faith*. Be not discouraged on account of thousands who stop short of it: it is our own fault, if we do not attain.—GOD would give us ample satisfaction if we did but deeply feel our wants. Both you and I want a deeper awakening, which will produce a death to outward things and speculative knowledge. Let us shut our eyes to the gilded clouds without us: let us draw inward, and search after GOD, if haply we may find him. Let us hold our confidence, though we are often constrained against hope to believe in hope. But let us not rest in our confidence, as thousands do: let it help us to struggle and wait, till he come. Let us habituate ourselves to live inwardly. This will solemnize us, and prevent our trifling with the things of GOD. We may be thankful for what we have without resting in it. We may strive, and yet not trust in our striving, but expect all from divine grace."

"Four or five years after, he says, "I send this to enquire after your welfare, and to let you know, that though I am pretty well in body, yet I break fast. But I want to break faster in my spirit than I do. Yet, blessed be GOD, I have been in such pinching, grinding circumstances for near a year, by a series of providential and domestic trials, as have given me some deadly blows. I am not without hope of setting my eyes on you once more. Mr. *Wesley* kindly

kindly invites me to travel with him, and visit some of the societies. I feel an inclination to break one of my chains, parochial retirement, which may be a nest for self-indulgence. I leave the matter entirely to the Lord."

"Mean time he *mourned*, not only for himself and his friends, but also for the church of GOD. "The few professors," says he, "which I see in these parts, are so far from what I wish them to be, that I cannot but cry out, Lord, how long wilt thou give thy heritage up to desolation? How long shall the heathen say, *Where is now their (indwelling) GOD?*" In another letter (dated May 8, 1776) he writes, "I see so little fruit in these parts, that I am almost disheartened. I am closely followed with the thought, that faith in the dispensation of the Spirit is at a very low ebb. But it may be better in other places. I shall be glad to travel a little, to see the goodness of the land. May GOD make and keep us humble, loving, disinterested, and zealous."

"These quotations give us not only an example of *holy mourning*, but likewise of *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*. In this he was peculiarly worthy our imitation. He never rested in any thing he had either experienced or done in spiritual matters. *But this one thing he did: forgetting those things that were behind, and reaching forth unto those things which were before, he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of GOD in Christ Jesus*: he was a true christian racer, always on the stretch for higher and better things. Though his attainments, both in experience and usefulness, were above the common standard, yet the language of his conversation and behaviour always was, *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfected; but I follow after, if by any means I may apprehend That, for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*. He had his eye upon a full conformity to the Son of GOD, or what the apostle terms, *The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*. Nor could he be satisfied with any thing less.

"And he was *meek*, like his Master, as well as *lowly in heart*. Not that he was so by nature, but of a fiery, passi-

onate spirit. But so thoroughly had grace subdued nature, so fully was he renewed in the spirit of his mind, that for many years before his death, I believe he was never observed by any one, friend or foe, to be out of temper. And yet he did not want provocation, and that sometimes in a high degree, especially from those whose religious sentiments he thought it his duty to oppose. One of these, who once loved him so well, as to be ready to pull out his eyes for him, was so exasperated on reading his second Check, that he wrote to him in the most bitter terms. But none of these things moved him; no, not in the least degree. The keenest word he used upon the occasion was, "What a world, what a religious world we live in!"

"Hence arose his readiness to bear with the weaknesses, and forgive the faults of others: the more remarkable, considering his flaming zeal against sin, and deep concern for the glory of GOD. Such hatred to sin, and such love to the sinner I never saw joined together before. This very circumstance convinced me of the height of his grace, bearing so much of his Master's image, whose hatred to sin and love to sinners are equally infinite. He took all possible pains to detect what was evil, in any of those that were under his care; pursuing it through all its turnings and windings, and stripping it of all its disguises. Yet none so ready to excuse, when it was confessed, and to conceal it, even from his most intimate friends.

"He never mentioned the faults of an absent person, unless absolute duty required it. And then he spoke with the utmost tenderness, extenuating, rather than aggravating. None could draw his picture more exactly than St. Paul has done, in the thirteenth of the first epistle to the Corinthians. Every feature in that masterly piece of apostolic painting was found in him. Let all that knew him, especially his intimate friends, recollect the spirit and behaviour of this servant of the GOD of Love; and then let them judge whether I exaggerate when I say, *He suffered long and was kind: he envied not: acted not rashly; was not puffed up; did not behave himself unseemly; sought not his own, was not easily provoked. He thought no evil, rejoiced not in iniquity,*

iniquity, but rejoiced in the truth. He covered all things, believed all things, hoped all things, and endured all things. It would be easy to enlarge on all these particulars, and shew how they were exemplified in him. But waving this, I would only observe, that with regard to two of them, kindness to others, and not seeking his own, he had few equals. His kindness to others was such, that he bestowed his all upon them: his time, his talents, his substance. His knowledge, his eloquence, his health, his money, were employed day by day for the good of mankind. He prayed, he wrote, he preached, he visited the sick and well, he conversed, he gave, he laboured, he suffered, winter and summer, night and day: he endangered, nay, destroyed his health, and in the end gave his life also for the profit of his neighbours, that they might be saved from everlasting death. He denied himself even such food as was necessary for him, that he might have to give to them that had none. And when he was constrained to change his manner of living, still his diet was plain and simple. And so were his clothing and furniture, that he might save all that was possible for his poor neighbours.

“ He *sought not his own* in any sense, not his own honour, but the honour of GOD in all he said or did: he sought not his own interest, but the interest of his Lord, spreading knowledge, holiness, and happiness as far as he possibly could. He sought not his own pleasure, but studied to *please all men for their good to edification*: and to please Him that had called him to his kingdom and glory. And yet it is certain, he found the greatest pleasure, in pleasing GOD and his neighbour. For nothing could give an higher delight than this, to his pious and benevolent mind.

“ In the mean time he was a man of peace, and spared no pains to restore it where it was broken. He gave numberless proofs of this amiable disposition. “ When we were at *Trevecka* (to mention but one instance) two of the students were bitterly prejudiced against each other. He took them into a room by themselves, reasoned with them, wept over them, and at last prevailed. Their hearts were
broken;

broken; they were melted down: they fell upon each other's necks and wept aloud."

"The pains which he took to make peace at the *Leeds* conference, will not easily be forgotten. And although he could not prevail so far as might have been desired, yet his labour was not in vain.

"But I do not attempt his full character. I will only add, what the apostle recommends to the Philippians, was exactly copied by him. He was *blameless and harmless, a son of GOD, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation: shining among them as a light in the world.*"

17. I think one talent wherewith GOD had endued Mr. *Fletcher*, has not been sufficiently noted yet. I mean his *courtesy*; in which there was not the least touch either of art or affectation. It was pure and genuine, and sweetly constrained him to behave to every one (although particularly to inferiors) in a manner not to be described: with so inexpressible a mixture of humility, love, and respect. This directed his words, the tone of his voice, his looks, his whole attitude, his every motion. This seems to be intended by St. *Paul*, in those words, *ὅν ἀρχαίως*. Not so well expressed in our translation by, *behaveth not itself unseemly*. Do not the words literally mean, *Is not ill-bred?* Behaves on all occasions with decency and good-breeding? Certainly so did Mr. *Fletcher*. Never did any man more perfectly suit his whole behaviour to the persons and the occasion. So that one might apply to him with great propriety the words of the ancient poet,

Illum quicquid agit, quoquo vestigia tendit
Componit furtim subsequiturque Decor.

I cannot translate this: but I can give the English reader a parallel, and more than a parallel.

Grace was in all his steps, heaven in his eye,
In all his gestures sanctity and love."

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

His Death.

“SOME time before he was taken ill (says Mrs. Fletcher) he mentioned to me a peculiar manifestation of love, which he received in his own house, with the application of those words, *Thou shalt walk with me in cubite*. He added, It is not a little thing, so to hang upon GOD by faith, as to feel no departure from him, and no rising in the heart against him. But this does not satisfy me. I often feel something far beyond this. Yea, I sometimes find such gleams of light and love, such wafts, as it were of the heavenly air! so powerful as if they would just then take my soul with them to glory. But *I am not filled*. I want to be filled with all the fulness of GOD. In conformity to these sentiments, when he was in his last illness, he expressed himself thus, “*I am filled, most sweetly filled.*” This conveyed much to my mind, as I understood by it the accomplishment of his large desires.

“Some time before the beginning of his last sickness, he was peculiarly penetrated with the nearness of eternity. There was scarce an hour in which he was not calling upon us, to drop every thought and every care, that we might attend to nothing, but the drinking deeper into GOD. We spent much time in wrestling with GOD, and were led in a peculiar manner, to abandon our whole selves, our souls and bodies into the hands of GOD; ready to do, and willing to suffer whatever was well-pleasing to him.

“And now the time drew near, when his faith was to be called to its last grand exercise: that, eyeing his Lord, he might

True in the fiery trial prove,
And pay him back his dying love.

A little before, being on his knees in prayer for light whether he * should go to *London* or not? The answer to him seemed

* I verily believe, if he had then gone to *London*, he would have been alive at this day. But I blame no one for thinking otherwise.

seemed to be, "Not to *London*, but to thy grave." When he acquainted me with this, he said, with a heavenly smile, "Satan would represent it to me as something dreadful, enforcing those words, *The cold grave! the cold grave!*" On the Sunday following (I think it was the next day) that anthem was sung in the church, *The Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing. He shall feed me in green pastures, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort. He shall convert my soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me. Thou shalt prepare a table before me, against them that trouble me. Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.*

"In his return home, he observed in how uncommon a degree those words had been blest to his soul. And from that very time, I do not remember to have seen in him the least marks of temptation. He shewed an unusual cheerfulness and liveliness in every part of his work; and seemed to increase in strength of body, as well as in strength of soul. Truly it was to him according to his faith. He feared no evil. And his cup was filled with righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

"On Thursday, August 4, he was employed in the work of GOD from 3 in the afternoon till 9 at night. When he came home, he said, "I have taken cold;" but seemed not to regard it. He was far from well on Friday and Saturday; but was uncommonly drawn out in prayer. On Saturday night he was abundantly worse, and his fever appeared very strong. I begged that he would by no means think of going to church in the morning. But he told me, it was the will of the Lord: in which case I never dared to persuade. In reading prayers he was very near fainting away. I got through the crowd, and intreated him to come out of the desk. But he let me and others know, in his sweet manner, that we were not to interrupt the order of GOD. I then silently retired to my pew, where all around me were in tears. When the windows were opened, by
which

which he appeared to be a little refreshed, he went on: and then preached with a strength and recollection that surprised us all.

"After sermon he walked up to the communion-table, uttering these words, "I am going to throw myself under the wings of the cherubim, before the mercy-seat." The service lasted till near two. Sometimes he was constrained to stop; being hardly able to stand upon his feet. The people were deeply affected, which they were not able to conceal: groans and weeping were on every side. Gracious Lord! how was it my soul was kept so calm, in the midst of the most tender feelings. Notwithstanding his extreme weakness, he gave out several verses of hymns, and lively sentences of exhortation. As soon as ever the service was over, we hurried him to bed. When he lay down, nature being quite exhausted, he immediately fainted away. He afterwards dropt into a sleep for some time, and on waking, cried out with a pleasant smile, "Now, my dear, thou seest I am no worse for doing the Lord's work. He never fails me when I trust in him." Having eat a little dinner, he dozed most of the evening: now and then waking, with the praises of GOD in his mouth. At night his fever returned: but it was not violent; and yet his strength decreased amazingly. On Monday and Tuesday we had a little paradise together. He lay on a couch in the study: and though often changing posture, was sweetly pleasant, and frequently slept a good while together. When he was awake, he delighted in hearing me read hymns, and treatises on faith and love. His words were all animating, and his patience beyond expression. When he had a very nauseous medicine to take, he seemed to enjoy the cross: according to a word, which he was used often to repeat, "We are to seek a perfect conformity to the will of GOD; and leave him to give us pleasure or pain, as it seemeth him good."

"I asked him, whether he had any advice to leave me, if he should be taken from me? He replied, "I have nothing particular to say: the Lord will open all before thee." I said, Have you any conviction, that GOD is about to
take

take you? He said, "No: not in particular. Only I always see death so inexpressibly near, that we both seem to stand on the verge of eternity." While he slept a little, I besought the Lord, if it was his good pleasure, to spare him to me a little longer. But my prayer seemed to have no wings: and I could not help mingling continually therewith, Lord, give me perfect resignation! This uncertainty made me tremble, lest GOD was going to put into my hands the bitter cup with which he lately threatened my husband. Some weeks before, I myself was ill of a fever, and not without danger. My husband then felt the whole parting scene, and struggled for perfect resignation. He said, "O Polly, shall I ever see the day, when thou must be carried out to bury! How will the little things which thy tender care has prepared for me in every part of the house, wound and distress me? How is it? I think I feel jealousy! I am jealous of the worms! I seem to shrink at the thought of giving my dear Polly to the worms."

"Now all these reflections returned upon my heart with the weight of a millstone. I cried to the Lord, and these words were deeply impressed on my spirit, *Where I am, there shall my servants be, that they may behold my glory.* This promise was full of comfort to my soul. I saw that in Christ's immediate presence was our home, and that we should have our re-union, in being deeply centered in him. I received it as a fresh marriage for eternity: as such I trust for ever to hold it. All that day, whenever I thought of the expression, *to behold my glory*, it seemed to wipe away every tear, and was as the ring whereby we were joined anew.

[Continued at page 547.]

AN ACCOUNT

Of the most remarkable Occurrences of the Life of

JOSEPH EVERETT,

In a Letter to Bishop Asbury.

(Written by himself.)

I HAVE been often exercised with a desire to exhibit to the world, the dealings of the Spirit of GOD with my soul, but have as often been tempted to think it proceeded from pride, till of late I have felt the impression stronger than ever, by conversing with you on the subject; and am determined to send it into the world, with this view, that it may be of use to some. According to the wisdom given to St. *Paul*, the Lord chooses the foolish things of the world, to confound the things that are wise; and weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty.—If this is the case of the following narration, may that divine Spirit who hath done the work, receive the praise, and I shall be amply rewarded.

I was born in *Queen Ann's* county in the state of *Maryland*, on the 17th day of *June*, 1732. My parents were neither rich nor poor, but laboured and taught me to labour for my living. As to religion, if I may use the term, we had none, but called ourselves of the Church of *England*; the name we had, but alas! that was all; for, with shame may I speak it, we had not even the form: indeed we went to church, so called, and what did we hear when we went, think you? Why, a parcel of dead morality, and that delivered by a blind, avaricious minister, sent by the devil to deceive the people. I have, since the Lord opened my eyes, stood amazed to see sinners not only contented to go thoughtlessly to ruin, but giving blind guides (for such, I fear, some are) most extravagant sums to go before them to hell. O GOD, put a stop to the false prophets making mer-

merchandise of the people's souls! As well as I remember, from the day I was born until I left my father's house, which was more than twenty years, I never saw the worship of GOD performed in his family; but almost *every* kind of iniquity was practised; which shows the truth of GOD's word, that *we are conceived in iniquity, and in sin are we brought forth*. I soon found myself to love sin. My nature was a fit soil for the devil's seed to take root and grow in. I early learned to swear, and to vent my angry passions; to do mischief, and to tell lies to hide it, that I might not get correction for my faults. I can remember my being often very uneasy without knowing what was the cause. I was afraid of death, and often distressed in my sleep, and frequently enquiring about GOD and eternal things; and sometimes felt such a weight of guilt as would cause me to make resolutions to do better for the future. But my resolutions were like ropes of sand. Thus I went on till I arrived to manhood, and from the day I was born until I was twenty years old, I never heard one gospel-sermon. My father sent me to school two years when I was young, where I learned to read; which, by the goodness of GOD, thro' the care of an indulgent mother, I never lost. She *would* make me read my book, which then I counted a hardship.

In this state of wickedness I lived till I got married. The companion I chose was as willing to go to ruin as I was. I believe it would have puzzled a philosopher to determine who loved sin most.

Thus I went on in the road to death for several years, from bad to worse; until a people came into the parts where I lived, called *New-lights* or *Whitefieldites*. They, by their preaching, caused a great noise in our neighbourhood; some said one thing about them, and some another. However, I went to hear them. I must confess that the Lord, all my life while I lived in sin and wickedness, would at one time or other make my life bitter by reason of my sin; particularly when I saw danger near. It appears to me that I had less pleasure in sin than any other person, and in those times, did believe that I should go to hell, if I did
not

not quit them. But alas! my sins I hated to part with, and I adore that mercy that stopt the hand of justice, or I might now be lifting up my eyes in hell, calling for water to cool my tongue in vain. In going to hear these *Nervelights* preach, I was made to see myself in the way to hell plainer than ever; and as I constantly attended the preaching of the word, my sins would appear more clear to me. I thought, before I heard them, that the whole of christianity consisted in breaking off from all our wicked practices; and the performance of such as common honesty or justice between man and man: but in hearing them, I was convinced that religion was something else; that I must be born again, or never see the kingdom of GOD. And they proved it by the authority of the bible, which left a conviction of its truth on my heart, that I never lost: they proved that religion was the work of an Almighty Power; that it was a new creation in the soul; they showed the necessity of a divine power to awaken the sinner to feel his wretchedness and spiritual death, and showed him his helpless condition; and that repentance is wrought in the soul by the Divine Spirit; with the nature and necessity of a gospel-faith, as the instrumental cause of our salvation; that by it a sinner is justified; that without it we cannot please GOD; that whosoever had it, knew their sins forgiven; and that whosoever died without it, must eternally perish.

This kind of preaching broke up all my former views of religion, and left such a keen conviction on my soul, as gave me new sensations which rendered me miserable from day to day. I began to fall out with my sins, and to break off from them, and to struggle with my stubborn heart, which I found too strong for me; which made me cry out with one of old, *wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Now I began to read the scriptures and other books of piety, and to pray in secret places; likewise to pray to GOD in my family, and to watch over all my ways; to observe the sabbath-day, and to do justly to my neighbours, and constantly to attend the preaching of the gospel: for heaven and hell were all I thought

thought on; and the more I meditated on them, the more I could see their propriety; and the more I prayed, the more I saw cause to pray. Thus I went on in a legal way, expecting that GOD would save me for doing these duties. But alas! how was I disappointed! for in the performance of these things, the Lord answered my prayers by imparting more and more light to my soul, which made me see and feel my wretchedness to such a degree, that I saw I was one of the most miserable creatures out of hell. Now I began to envy the brute beasts, because they had no souls; or with *Job*, to curse the day wherein I was born: yet I would pray for more distress, and grieve because I could not mourn. Sometimes I would feel less distress than at other times; then the enemy of my soul would tell me all was gone; at other times he would insinuate that my distress was only imaginary, and that there was no reality in it. Sometimes he would insist that my day of grace was entirely gone; at other times he would represent to me, that I was one for whom Christ never died, and that I was reprobated from eternity to suffer the vengeance of everlasting fire. So that at times my life was a burden to me, and I could say that I was carnal, sold under sin; I could feel that the carnal mind is enmity against GOD, and that it is not subject to the law of GOD, neither indeed can be; that they that are under the influence of the flesh, are enemies to GOD. I felt that, by the instrumentality of GOD's law, which is just and good, my soul was roused from its carnal security, and that it immediately resisted or fought against no less a being than the eternal JEHOVAH himself. Oh! the damnable nature of sin! I now saw clearly that I must be born again, or sink to perdition. I felt that GOD would be just, if he sent me to hell; and that if he did, he would be glorified in my damnation.

Thus I went on for near two years, a stranger to peace, with my head bowed down like a bulrush; but my burden was not at all times alike heavy. Those ministers that I went to hear, preached that the gospel was absolute, and that there was no condition in the salvation of sinners; that
Jesus

Jesus Christ died for a certain number, and that they all should be saved and not one lost; and that all the rest of mankind should be damned and go to hell; and that when one of the elect was converted, he must persevere and go to heaven: which doctrine I really believed, and drank into the spirit of it, as far as my capacity would admit of. So that I compare the penitent soul to melted mettle, that will take the impression of whatever mould it is cast into. So did my soul take the Calvinistic or Antinomian mould; the effects of which, if it had not been prevented by divine grace, would have been my inevitable ruin for ever. I often compare that system of principles to a trap. And a trap it is, I believe, by which the devil, the grand fowler, catches millions of millions of unwary souls. If this is the work of GOD upon you, says the tempter, he that hath begun it will carry it on to eternal life. The Lord knows what I suffered by it. However, the Searcher of Hearts knew my desires, that I wanted to save my soul and to do his will. He enabled me to go forward, and bore with my weakness and ignorance. He saw me afar off, as he did the prodigal, striving to return to my heavenly Father's house. He saw me opposing strong temptations by his grace, and took the will for the deed. Persecutions I was no stranger to, both abroad and at home; for I found my dear Master's word fulfilled, that *a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

By this time my external deportment was new. I would reprove sinners publicly, and saw that they hated him that reproveth in the gate. I saw the word of GOD fulfilled in various cases; but as to the knowledge of sin forgiven, I was still a stranger to it. I still worshipped an unknown GOD; I was a stranger to inward piety. In short, I had no religion. I had taken great pains to get knowledge, and could talk of the doctrines of grace, and of the gospel. I was much thought of, and was said to be a great christian, and they let me know it. Supposing them to be proper judges, I thought I was in a very hopeful way. I now see, knowledge without humility serveth only to puff up the soul with pride.

By

By this time I was joined in communion and fellowship with the Presbyterian or New-light church. However my conscience was tender, and would not permit me to sin without conviction, no more than fire could be on my flesh and not burn me. I praise that GOD, who has promised that he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, until he brings forth judgment to victory. He still followed me by his grace.

One Sabbath-day as I was setting in my house, none of the family being at home, meditating on the things of GOD, I took up the bible, and it providentially opened at the eleventh chapter of St. *Luke's* gospel; and casting my eyes on the fifth verse, read to the fourteenth. And that moment I saw there was something to be experienced in religion that I was a stranger to. I laid down the bible, and went directly up into a private chamber to seek the blessing. And everlasting praises be to him who has said, *seek and ye shall find*. I was on my knees but a very few moments before he shed abroad his love in such a manner in my heart, that I knew Jesus Christ was the Saviour of the world and the everlasting Son of the Father, and my Saviour; and that I had redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of my sins. I felt these words by the power of his Spirit run through my soul, so that the tongue of a *Gabriel* could not have expressed what I felt: *I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee*. I felt such raptures, and saw with the eyes of my soul such beauties in the Lord Jesus Christ, as opened such a heaven of love in my breast, that I could with the poet sing the following lines:

I rode on the sky,
 Freely justify'd I!
 Nor envied *Elijah* his seat:
 My soul mounted higher
 In a chariot of fire,
 And the moon it was under my feet.

So that being justified by faith, I had peace with GOD, through our Lord Jesus Christ. I rejoiced in the hope of the glory of GOD.

[Continued at page 555.]

WALKING in SLEEP.

READING in the Arminian Magazine, an account of a gentleman who used to walk in his sleep, it brought to my remembrance the following facts; which I thought might be of service to such as are troubled with that disorder, by which some have run the risk of their lives.

The eldest son of one of my uncles, who used to walk in his sleep, was cured by a tub full of water being set in the nursery when he went to bed. My uncle was told that it was likely he might walk into it; and that if it waked him, he would never do it again. The tub of water was accordingly set in the room, and he getting up as usual, walked into it, and by so doing waked himself; but never attempted to rise in his sleep after.

When I was a child I walked in my sleep, and my mother was advised to awake me suddenly, and endeavour to frighten me. But others told her this was dangerous; for some children had been thrown into fits by that means, and some irrecoverably lost their senses. She therefore tried the tub of water, which so effectually succeeded, that from the first night it was set, I never walked again in my sleep.

How long the water was continued in my room I do not know; being only about seven years old. From the account the servants gave, my mother did not believe I was asleep. She therefore ordered them to call her some night as soon as I began to move; but, when she came, she said the sight was so affecting, she never desired to see it more: for my eyes were open; but looked like those of a corpse!

and

and my face was so deadly pale, and covered with a cold sweat, with something so inexpressibly distressing in my countenance, that I appeared like one rising from the tomb. She said, she spoke to me, and I answered as rationally as if I had been awake: and that I distinguished when she asked a question; but in the morning, she said, I knew nothing of what had happened.

Whether it would answer upon persons who have had a long habit of walking in their sleep, I know not; but I am sure (however it be accounted for) it cured us two.

D. D.

Leeds, Oct. 31, 1785.

An Account of the Behaviour of three Malefactors, who were executed at Reading, in Berkshire, on the 25th of March 1786.

ABOUT nine o'clock in the morning, Mr. C. Mr. J. and Mr. L. visited *John Steptoe, Richard Hemmings, and William Crips*, who were to be executed that day.

Mr. L. had visited *Steptoe* twice before; who as soon as he saw him, came up and shook him by the hand, with a very cheerful countenance. He had very lately known the pardoning love of GOD, and was quite resigned, and happy in the Lord. He had been in the prison some months before his condemnation; during which period he read the bible three times over, and could repeat *St. Paul's* epistle to the *Hebrews*.

For some time before the assizes, he frequently got the prisoners together on an evening, and prayed with them extempore.

Hemmings said, he had reason to be thankful that he was brought to that place; for till that time, he had been living without GOD in the world. He said, it was a great mercy the Lord had not cut him off in his sins; and was truly thankful he was now convinced of his want of a Saviour.

Crips

Crips appeared to be ignorant of the way of salvation by Christ. Mr. C. asked him whether he was not afraid to die? He said, no; but could give no sufficient reason for it. Mr. C. and Mr. J. then spoke to him in a close manner; and though he did not seem hardened, yet he was not truly concerned about his soul. Mr. C. gave a short exhortation, sung a hymn, and (at the request of *Steptoe*) the fifty-first psalm, and then went to prayer twice.

After dinner, Mr. C. Mr. J. and Mr. L. revisited the prisoners. *Crips* seemed then to be much affected, and said, he was convinced of his lost state. A hymn being sung, the gaoler, his wife and daughter, and several other persons joined. Singing being over, *Steptoe* was desired to go to prayer, which he did with great earnestness: while most who were present were deeply affected; and some, who before had but little concern about religion, wept much.

When prayer was ended, Mr. C. spoke to *Hemmings*, and found him happy in the Lord. He said (among other things) "I shall soon be in the arms of Jesus for ever!" Afterwards they all went into the chapel, and received the sacrament. When they returned, *Steptoe* said, "I have been feeding on Christ by faith, who is the Living Bread." *Steptoe* then desired Mr. L. to give out the sinner's lamentation, which they all continued singing, with great fervor, till the under-sheriff sent for them.

The executioner coming into the cell, *Steptoe* immediately went up to him, and with a cheerful countenance shook him by the hand, as though he was his friend. While the coffins were carrying out, *Steptoe* was standing a little way from the cell-door, and the sun shining, he looked up, and said, "The sun of nature shines very bright!" and added, "This is the last sun I shall see shining below; but I shall soon see the Sun of Righteousness, and be with him for ever!"

As soon as the prisoners got into the cart, they began to sing, and continued to do so, at times, till they came to the fatal tree.

After the clergyman had done talking and praying with them, *Steptoe* stood up, and in a firm, collected, and most

affecting manner, gave an exhortation to the people for near five and twenty minutes. Among other things, he said, "It was sin which brought me to this (pointing to the tree) and I am going to suffer justly; but although I am condemned by the law of man, yet as I am interested in the Lord Jesus Christ, I shall not be condemned at the bar of GOD. O think not, my dear fellow-sinners, because we are brought to this shameful end, that we are sinners above all men. I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Do not think that because some of you may now be living in pleasure, pomp, or splendor, that it will avail you any thing when you come to die; for you will be condemned at the bar of GOD, unless you forsake your sins, and flee to the Lord Jesus Christ. And as I have found an interest in him, I do assure you my fellow-sinners, my present situation (though you may think otherwise) is preferable to yours, who are yet in your sins. Therefore flee from the wrath to come, and seek religion with all your might; for there is nothing but true religion which can make you happy either in life or death." He likewise spoke of his belief of the resurrection, in very strong terms, and added,

"Oh my drooping friends below,
Did you half this glory know;
Daily would you stretch the wing,
Thus to fly and thus to sing."

He then prayed very fervently, for seven or eight minutes, and was much at liberty.

After he had done, *Hemmings* spoke to the people, and warned them to forsake drinking, loose women, and other bad company; and to attend the house of GOD, where they might hear those things which would do them good.

When the clergyman left the cart, they all called out for Mr. C. who immediately came to them. *Hemmings* said, I never was so happy in all my life; for the Lord comforts me.—*Steptoe* said, My mind is quite comfortable and composed, and I am still happy.—*Crips* also declared, he

he was happy. Mr. C. then gave out two verses of that hymn, "Jesu lover of my soul," and was just going to prayer, when the under-sheriff sent an order for him to quit the cart immediately: on which some of the spectators spoke aloud, and said the conduct of the under-sheriff was shameful; and a Mr. *Davis*, a minister of *Reading*, said to the prisoners, "Remember, the sheriff cannot separate your souls from Christ."

Mr. C. then took leave of the prisoners, by exhorting them to look to Jesus; and they all continued fervent in prayer to the last.

Crips's last words were, "O GOD, have mercy on me! Jesus thou son of *David*, have pity on me! Jesus, thou friend of sinners, have mercy on me!"

Steptoe's last words were, "Into thy hands I commend my soul, O GOD, for thou hast redeemed it."

Hemmings also was launched into eternity, calling upon the Lord.—*Steptoe* had a cheerful and heavenly countenance, even to the moment the cap was drawn over his face.—*Hemmings* and *Crips* were also firm and collected to the last.

L E T T E R.

To my most endeared Friends, the Servants of Christ in Taunton, Grace and Peace.

Most dearly beloved and longed for, my Joy and Crown:

MY heart's desire and prayer to GOD for you is, that you may be saved. I know that you are the butt of men's rage and malice: but you may satisfy yourselves, as *David* in sustaining *Shimei*'s curses: it may be, the Lord will look upon our affliction, and requite good for their cursing this day. But, however that be, hold on your way. Your name indeed is cast out as evil, and you

are

are hated of all men for Christ's sake, for cleaving to his ways and servants: but let not this discourage you, for you are now more than ever blessed: only hold fast, that no man take your crown. Let not any that have begun in the spirit, end in the flesh. Do not forsake GOD till he forsake you: he that endureth to the end shall be saved: the promise is to him that overcometh; therefore think not of looking back: now you have set your hands to Christ's plough, though you labour and suffer, the crop will pay for all: now the Lord is trying who they be that will trust him. The world are all for present pay; they must have something in hand, and will not follow the Lord when there are hazard and hardship in his service. But now is the time for you to prove yourselves believers, when there is nothing visible but hazard, and expence, and difficulty in your Maker's service. Now, my brethren, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong: if you can trust in his promises now, when nothing appears but bonds, and losses, and tribulation, this will be like believers. Brethren, I beseech you to reckon upon no other but crosses here. Let none of you flatter yourselves with dreams of sleeping in your ease, and temporal prosperity, and carrying heaven too. Count not upon rest till you come to the land of promise. Not that I would have any of you run upon hazards uncalled: no, we shall meet them soon enough in the way of our duty, unless we turn aside: but I would have you cast overboard your worldly hopes, and be content to wait till you come on the other side of the grave. Is it not enough to have a whole eternity of happiness? If GOD throws in the comforts of this life too, I would not have you throw them back again, or despise the goodness of the Lord: but I would that you should use this world, as not abusing it, that you should be crucified to the world, and the world to you; that you should declare plainly that you seek a better country, which is an heavenly. Ah! my dear brethren, I beseech you to carry it like pilgrims and strangers, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against your souls; for what have we to do with the customs and fashions of this world, who are strangers in it? Be contented

tented with a traveller's lot : know you not that you are in a strange land ? All is well as long as it is well at home ; I pray you, brethren, daily consider your condition : do you not remember that you are in an inn ? And what though you be but meanly accommodated ! though you fare hard, and lie hard ! Is this a strange thing ? What should travellers look for else ? Indeed if you were of the world, the world would love its own. But now GOD hath called you out of the world ; therefore the world hateth you : but remember, it is your duty to love them, even while they hate you ; and to pray for mercy for them that will show no mercy or justice. This I desire you to observe as a great duty of the present times ; and let not any so forget their duty, as to wish evil to them that do evil to us ; or to please themselves with the thoughts of being even with them. Let us commit ourselves to him that judgeth righteously, and show ourselves the children of the Most High, who doth good to his enemies, and is kind to the unkind and unthankful ; and what if they do hate us ? Their love and good-will were much more to be feared, than their hatred. Brethren, keep yourselves in the love of GOD ; here is wisdom. O happy souls, that are his favourites ! for the Lord's sake look to this, make sure of something : look to your sincerity above all things : let not any of you conclude, that because you are of the suffering party, therefore all is well : look to the foundation, that your hearts be taken off from every sin, and set upon GOD as your blessedness : beware that none of you have only a name to live, and be no more than almost christians. For the love of your souls, make a diligent search, and try upon what ground you stand ; for it pities me to think any of you should hazard so much, and yet lose all at last : but when once you bear the mark of GOD's favour, you need not fear the world's frowns : cheer up therefore, brethren, be strong in the Lord, and of good courage under the world's usage : fear not : in our Father's house there is bread enough, and room enough : this is sufficient to comfort us under all the inconveniencies of the way, that we have so happy a home, so ready a Father, so
goodly

goodly an heritage. Oh! comfort one another with these words: let GOD see that you can trust in his word: let the world see that you can live upon GOD. I shall share my prayers and love among you all, and commit you to the Almighty GOD: the Keeper of *Israel* that never slumbereth nor sleepeth, be your watchman and keeper to the end. Farewell. I am,

A fervent well-wisher of your temporal and eternal affairs,

J. A.

Poetry.

The WEATHERCOCK: an Epigram.

HAIL, versatile emblem of the human mind,
 True to thyself, and model of mankind:
 Thy only virtue is in them a vice;
 This moment thus, the next quite otherwise.
 Thine an effect of nature's potent laws,
 As theirs self-int'rest or self-love the cause.
 Thy various motions point which way inclin'd
 The fix'd or vary'd current of the wind:
 Theirs only prove how fickle are their own,
 How weakly grounded, and how little known.
 First this, then that; then this, then that again;
 Now all a-go, and now a middler strain.
 Such is mankind, creation's restless heir,
 Than wind less certain, and more light than air!

THE UNIVERSAL LOVE OF CHRIST.

LET earth and heav'n agree,
 Angels and men be join'd,
 To celebrate with me
 The Saviour of mankind,
 T'adore the all-atoning Lamb,
 And blefs the found of Jesu's Name.

Jefus, transporting found !
 The joy of earth and heav'n !
 No other help is found,
 No other Name is giv'n
 By which we can falvation have ;
 But Jefus came the world to fave.

Jefus, harmonious Name !
 It charms the hofts above !
 They evermore proclaim,
 And wonder at his love !
 'Tis all their happinefs to gaze,
 'Tis heav'n to fee our Jefu's face.

His Name the finner hears,
 And is from fin fet free ;
 'Tis mufic in his ears,
 'Tis life, and victory ;
 New fongs do now his lips employ,
 And dances his glad heart for joy.

Stung by the fcorpion fin,
 My poor expiring foul
 The balmly found drinks in,
 And is at once made whole :
 See there my Lord upon the tree !
 I hear, I feel he dy'd for me !

For

For me and all mankind
 'The Lamb of GOD was slain;
 My Lamb his life resign'd
 For ev'ry soul of man;
 Loving to all, he none past by,
 He would not have one sinner die.

O, unexampled love!
 O, all-redeeming grace!
 How freely didst thou move
 To save a fallen race!
 What shall I do to make it known,
 What thou for all mankind hast done?

For this alone I breathe,
 To spread the gospel-sound;
 Glad tidings of thy death
 To all the nations round;
 Who all may feel thy blood apply'd,
 Since all are freely justify'd.

O for a trumpet-voice
 On all the world to call,
 To bid their hearts rejoice
 In him who dy'd for all!
 For all my Lord was crucify'd,
 For all, for all my Saviour dy'd.

To serve thy blessed will,
 Thy dying love to praise,
 Thy counsel to fulfil,
 And minister thy grace,
 Freely what I receive to give,
 The life of heaven on earth I live.